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ABSTRACT

Reported are two studies of the categorization of adolescents' justifications for the morality of others' actions. To analyze interview data, a new method of scoring moral judgments was developed. Study 1, involving 180 individuals from 12 to 21 years of age, focused on dimensions of reflection and abstraction associated with four categories of justifications: descriptive, naturalistic, theoretical, and reflective. Study 2, involving 120 school and university students of mid-level ability between 12 and 21 years of age, explored inter-rater reliability and compared Study 1 findings with findings from the original short form of Kohlberg's Form A interview. Results showed that a reasonable degree of inter-rater reliability could be achieved and that evident developmental trends were robust with respect to interviewers and interview content. This content had an expected and comprehensible effect on the frequency of items within content categories. Results were interpreted within the context of a model of the development of moral reasoning that emphasized the influence of the social focus of the interviewee and the process of individuation toward a secular or a religious view of morality. The notion that a more differentiated individuation may also occur within each of these categories was explored, as were shifts from paternalism to autonomous decision-making in thinking about social life. (RH)

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A New Approach to Coding Moral Dilemma Responses

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Abstract

Two studies of the categorisation of justifications for the morality of the actions of others are reported. Justifications were categorised using a scoring scheme not previously reported. Results showed that a reasonable degree of inter-rater reliability could be achieved and that developmental trends detected were robust with respect both to interviewers and interview content, although interview content had an expected and comprehensible effect on the frequency of items within content categories. Results were interpreted within the context of a model of the development of moral reasoning that emphasises the influence of the social focus of the interviewee and the process by which individuation occurs towards either a secular or a religious view of morality. The notion that a more differentiated individuation may also occur within each of these categories was explored, as were shifts from paternalism to autonomous decision-making in thinking about some areas of social life.

A New Way of Scoring Moral Judgement Interviews

Introduction

Methods of scoring moral judgement interviews involve three kinds of assumptions: those about the interviewing process, about the method of categorising interview responses and broader theoretical and philosophical assumptions. The object of this paper is to show that using assumptions that have not previously been combined in the particular way advocated here a reliable method of classifying the justifications for moral judgements can be produced and this method can be used to demonstrate developmental trends during adolescence.

The interviewing methods used in the two studies described below were very similar to those advocated by Kohlberg (1975) and Colby and Kohlberg (1987b). Interviewees were presented with situations requiring moral judgements and were then asked to justify such judgements in as much detail as possible. Following an initial justification the interviewer would press for further justification up to the point that the interviewee appeared incapable of producing any additional justification. The assumptions adopted about what happens during such an interview were however quite different from the cognitive structuralism of Kohlberg and were close to the view of such interviews developed by Trainer (1982). According to Trainer, most adolescent interviewees adopt a 'tool box' approach to producing moral justifications rather than attempting systematic justification. Their tool box contains disparate kinds of justification. The type of justification that has the highest

chance of being seized on is influenced by the situation about which the initial judgement was made. Requests for further justification are met by delving into parts of the box that are less readily suggested by the initial situation. There are two empirical findings to back this view. The first is that types of response are strongly influenced by the suggested situation, the second that interviewees routinely produce a whole string of disparate types of justification without any apparent attempt to link them together or order their importance. The first of these results is most in evidence when scoring systems that are more detailed than those of Kohlberg are adopted. It has been found for Trainer's categorisation method by Trainer (1982) and for Williams's (1969) categorisation method by Turner (1987).

Particularly in late adolescence, attempts at developing an argument during the interview do appear, but such arguments tend to proceed within a given type of justification rather than linking types of justification together or adjudicating between them. Thus arguments based on promoting the interests of individuals may be extended to the general interest or those based on avoiding local social disharmony may be extended to the avoidance of wider disharmony. The main exception to this claim seems to be the occasional appearance of the argument that God desires human happiness, linking interest type justification with religious justification. Such statements are however statistically infrequent and we can account for the bulk of what occurs during such interviews without the notion of linkages between types of justification.

The development of the scheme reported here began from a large number of categories to try to capture as much information as possible.

This was followed by a second phase of development in which smaller categories were grouped together to exhibit dimensions of response. The scheme adopted here, which was developed in pilot studies prior to those reported below, differs in four respects from that of Williams (1969), which is its closest relative in regard to categorisation assumptions. The first is that there are even more base level categories than used by Williams. The second is that the dimensions used to organise base level categories differ from those used by Williams. The third is that one of the organising dimensions is used to regulate scoring into base level categories by adopting the assumption that the element of a reply that is greatest in reflectiveness determines the base level category to which the reply is assigned. Reflectiveness is a dimension of cognitive elaboration in replies. The present scoring method could be implemented without this third assumption provided that some replies were allowed to produce a score in more than one base level category simultaneously. However, this would both complicate the presentation of results and make the scorer's task more complex. At this preliminary stage it was decided to work with this third assumption. The fourth difference was that the present method draws a distinction not found in Williams's method between the content of moral rules and types of justification for moral judgements and rules. It is argued that statement of a rule is one type of justification that can be set alongside justifications by human benefit or religious justifications but that such general forms of justification need to be clearly separated from the content of moral rules.

The main general theoretical and philosophical assumptions used in the present study were that there exist developmental shifts in the

level of abstraction and reflectiveness found in justifications at the same time that individuation occurs such that individual adults prefer differing styles of justification. Contrary to cognitive structuralism, it is assumed that shifts in abstraction and reflectiveness (which are conceived as distinct dimensions) occur primarily because of shifts in the focus of social interest as adolescence proceeds rather than because of cognitive improvements. Pilot studies had shown that replies are consistently below the cognitive level we might expect purely on cognitive developmental grounds, apparently being chiefly restricted by the focus of social interest. Thus, respondents in mid-adolescence often focus on the interests of local groups, although there is little doubt that much younger individuals can conceive of a broader public interest.

Developmental changes in the content of moral rules had not been examined in detail prior to the present studies, but there was an interest in examining the concepts surrounding autonomous decision-making in connection with this aspect of the analysis.

Study 1

Method

Sample

This comprised 180 individuals from 12 to 21 years of age obtained by personal approach in Melbourne City Square during school holidays. This method allowed the interviewing of adolescents in full time employment as well as those at school. The sample appeared reasonably

representative in regard to S.E.S. Each individual received one of three fifteen minute interviews, 20 of those receiving each interview being 12/13 years, 20 15/16 years and 20 19-21 years, half of each group male and half female.

Interviews

Because pilot studies indicated that the level of abstraction contained in the question may influence the level of abstraction contained in justifications, the three interviews controlled this dimension by presenting only situations involving action in small groups as opposed to that involving individuals or large populations. Questions involving only individuals cannot be devised for two of the topics studied, while it was felt that small groups would make the questions more relevant for younger adolescents. The interviews involved the topics of Distribution of Earnings (E), The Value of Life (L) and Exercise of Authority (A). Each interview finished with the following three standard schedule items: x) Provide a summary of the various justifications they have given, ask if this is correct and whether the justifications can be taken any further; y) Is there any religious justification for your thinking on this?; z) In societies other than our own people have had different beliefs from your own. (Give an example.) How do you react to this?' Question y) gives religious justifications a special status as it prompts the interviewee with this type of justification. The reason for doing this is that in a largely secularised society many interviewees who hold relgious views on ethical questions are reluctant to air them without an explicit invitation.

Interview E began:'1. A group of six teenagers did some work for a neighbour. They all did the same amount of work. As a result he wanted to reward them and gave them a thousand dollars. How ought they to divide it among themselves? Can you justify your answer?' Two further questions developed aspects of this division problem. Interview L began: '1. Three teenagers wanted some money to buy a new car. They bought a gun and robbed a service station. They decided that if anyone tried to stop them they would shoot them. During the robbery the station attendant tried to knock the gun out of one of the teenagers' hands and he fired at the attendant and killed him. Was this right? Can you justify your answer?' Two further questions asked about small group situations involving killing, one of which related to the ethics of killing enemy soldiers in battle. Interview A began:'1. Six teenagers decided they were going to recondition an old car they had bought cheaply. To do this they needed to have a team leader who would organise work on the car. They agreed to vote on who would be leader. It turned out that the most popular leader only polled four out of six votes. Should they accept him as the leader? Can you justify your answer?' Two further questions asked about the exercise of authority in small groups.

All interviews were given by the same interviewer.

Scoring

Only replies that appeared to be attempts to justify moral judgements or rules were scored.

Each category description given in the scoring manual (Langford, 1987) contained the definition given below and several examples. The

categories contained in the manual are arranged along two dimensions: abstraction and reflection. Each level of reflection contains a number of broad categories each of which comprises either two or three levels of abstraction. The level of abstraction is determined by the reference groups used in justifications, which may refer to the individual, to local groups such as family or friends or to wider groups, such as Australians or people in general. The four levels of reflection are descriptive (general rules and rights), naturalistic (based on what people tend to do or think), theoretical (providing a theoretical reason for rules) or reflective (evidencing some ability to think about the problems of elaborating such theories).

Descriptive Categories

There is only one category here, which comprises justifications providing us with a general rule that can be used to deduce the judgement being justified. This contains three levels of abstraction: rules applying to local situations; rules applying to large groups of people or to people in general; rules of this latter type that are explicitly said to be 'rights'. Trainer (1982) is probably right in saying that most adolescents mean little more than that they give strong assent to such rules when they say they are rights, but they are assigned a separate coding here.

Naturalistic Categories

This comprises three broad categories: justifications based on the fact that certain people think something is right (Belief); those based on the fact that people will inevitably behave in a certain way and this makes it right (Behaviour); those based on the idea that by obeying moral rules we can avoid punishment (Punishment). Each of these categories in theory can refer either to the individual, local groups or wider groups, though in the case of Belief, justification by local belief was so rare in the present interviews this was not used. Justification based on individual belief was nearly always based on the belief of the interviewee.

Theoretical Categories

This comprises four broad categories, two focussing on the idea of human benefit, two on religious justification. The first human benefit category (Interest) justifies judgements or rules by reference to the argument that they promote the interests or abilities of an individual, a local group of individuals or a wider group (including people in general). The second human benefit category (Social Harmony) justifies a judgement or rule by reference to the need to maintain social order or stability. The reference may be either to the harmony of a local group or to that of a wider group (e.g. 'society'). The first religious category (Religious Factual) justifies a judgment or rule by reference to the influence that the interviewee perceives religion to have on 'society' or 'the way we think'. This is an outsider's view of religion. The second religious category (Living Faith) justifies a judgement or rule by reference to the fact that it is divinely inspired or

sanctioned. This is the insider's view of religion. Both religious categories may apply to the beliefs of individuals, to those of local groups or to those of wider groups, such as churches or nations.

Reflective Categories

This includes developments of the human benefits categories which reflect on the problems that result when we admit that individuals, groups, classes or nations may be unaware or even systematically deceived about where their real interests lie. Adapting a traditional term, this is called Ideological. Developments of the religious categories occur in replies that reflect on an awareness that the ultimate aims of supernatural beings in commanding acts or rules are often hidden from mortals (Theological). Such reflections may involve commands issued to individuals, commands to local groups or commands or laws issued to wider groups such as nations or people in general.

Any item containing elements from more than one of these levels of reflection is scored according to the element at the highest level. Two kinds of case where this rule needs to be invoked are most common: those where the interviewee says 'I believe we should promote human interests' or 'I believe God wants us to do this'; those where a rule is mentioned at the same time as some other justification. Cases where there is more than one element at the highest level of reflection found in the item are rare and have to be decided at the discretion of the scorer.

Results and Discussion

The percentage of replies falling within broad categories for each interview are relatively numerous and stable. These are shown in Table 1. The percentage of replies falling into some of the subcategories formed by the combination of level of abstraction and the broad categories is quite small and unreliable. Table 2 only breaks down the three categories that attracted a large enough percentage of replies to make such a breakdown meaningful in a study of this size.

- Tables 1 and 2 -

Table 1 shows the predicted influence of suggested situation on the distribution of responses into broad categories. In an analysis of variance the interview factor had a significant effect on the percentage of an interviewee's responses falling into the Punishment category, P less than .05. The interview on the value of life encouraged the greatest percentage of replies in the Punishment category, apparently because there are heavy penalties for murder, while few of the actions suggested in the other interviews attract legally enforceable penalties. The interview factor also had a significant influence on percentage of replies in the Social Harmony category, P less than .01. The interview on the exercise of authority within local groups encouraged the greatest percentage of replies in this category, apparently because the need for leadership to act to maintain such harmony was suggested by the situations presented.

Tables 1 and 2 also suggest some generalisations that apply to all three interviews: 1. Within the Descriptive category there is a shift from concrete to abstract responses with increasing age; 2. Within the

Belief category the ratio of social to personal responses peaks at around 15/16 and declines thereafter; 3. Within the Interest category there is a shift from concrete to abstract responses with increasing age; 4. The combined percentage of Living Faith and Theological responses peaks at 15/16; 5. The combined percentage of responses in the Ideological and Theological categories increases with age.

The process of individuation that results in the differentiation of religious from secular views of ethics is only indirectly indexed in Table 1. In the study as a whole 16 per cent of interviewees gave at least one response that was in the Living Faith or Theological categories, with slightly more than this giving such responses in the 15/16 age group and slightly less in the other two groups. These individuals ranged from those who expressed a Pascalian desire to have an each way bet on the existence of God to several born again Christian fundamentalists who turned the interview into an opportunity to witness to the interviewer. The tendency to see ethical principles as divinely sanctioned was greatest among Catholics and Christian fundamentalists, reflecting the historical evolution of Catholicism in Melbourne and the universal inclination of fundamentalist movements. There can be little doubt that this tendency would have been even greater among Australian Catholics twenty years ago, before the secularisation of ethical instruction in Catholic schools.

Table 1 also suggests that individuation occurs within both the secular ethical viewpoint and the religious viewpoint through the elaboration of reflections upon the difficulties of utilitaranism and the uncomplicated acceptance of divine edict by a small minority of individuals, as evidenced by the emergence of Ideological and

Theological responses. There is little sign of any overall shift with increasing age in the relative emphasis assigned to the broad categories established by the 12/13 year age range. Descriptive, naturalistic and utilitarian-type replies continue to be brought out of the tool box in much the same proportions. This does not of course mean that they are brought out in the same proportions by all interviewees. At all the ages studied some individuals favoured one or more categories. The relatively small number of scorable responses from each individual obtained in this study makes it hard to reach firm conclusions about individual differences, but it appears that quite marked preferences of this kind already exist by 12/13 years.

Justifications within the Descriptive category as well as items scored in other categories contain various kinds of moral rules. These can be divided into rules that assert the right to make choices, those that prescribe what kind of choices should be made in order to achieve the maximum human benefit and those that are designed to prevent wrong to others or harm to the self as a result of choices. Rules prescribing the kind of choices to be made to maximise human benefit were overwhelmingly based on the idea that it is fair for everyone to receive equal reward for equal effort (equality of opportunity), with less than four percent at each age in the Distribution of Earnings interview asserting that rewards should be in inverse proportion to initial wealth (equality of outcomes). Rules such as 'thou shalt not murder' and 'thou shalt not steal' that are designed to prevent wrong to others also received overwhelming support at all ages. Developmental shifts in the content of rules are clearest in relation to the right to make choices and ideas about the morality of harming oneself. Older interviewees

tend to think of teenagers having an unassailable right to choose and then face the social or natural consequences of their own actions; younger interviewees tend to think that the right to choose needs to be curtailed by authority to avoid harm both to the self and to others.

In each interview only one of the situations presented aroused discussion of these issues and thus allowed developmental trends in content to be assessed. These were the suggestion that wages would be used either to buy drugs or guns (Distribution of Earnings), a question relating to the morality of killing in war (Value of Life) and a question relating to whether school students should be allowed to decide the content of their own curriculum (Exercise of Authority). The two most common responses among 12/13 year olds saw going to war either in terms of the survival of the country (kill or be killed) or their own self interest; the most common responses among 15/16 year olds saw it either in terms of the survival of the country or as a fraud perpetrated by politicians; those among 19-21 year olds saw it in terms either of the right of the individual to choose in the light of their own beliefs and ideals or in terms of the need for the individual to choose in accordance with the principle of respect for life. About three quarters of the younger group would not give teenagers money they had worked for if they were likely to use it to buy guns and shoot people, while half would not pay them if they were likely to buy drugs; for the middle group these figures were about sixty and fifteen percent; for the older group about fifty and five percent. The youngest group tended to think of curriculum decisions either in terms of the teacher's right to decide or in terms of the need to find a compromise between the wishes of the teacher and those of the students, while both the older groups thought

more in terms of the teacher as a guardian of the interests of the students or of society, though a substantial minority continue to think in terms of the teacher's authority. The right to choose provided you harm only yourself and not others is asserted by the oldest group not only in a social situation where such an idea is normally accepted in our society (payment for work), but also in deciding whether or not to fight for one's country. This group do not, however, accept the right of the individual school student to determine their own curriculum, believing that in this case some paternalism is justified.

Study 2

Introduction

The aims of the second study were: to investigate the robustness of the findings of the first study in relation to inter-interviewer differences; to investigate the inter-rater reliability of the scoring method; to compare findings from the original short form of Kohlberg's Form A interview (Kohlberg, 1958, stories 3-6) with those from interviews E and L from the first study when scored by the methods already described.

Method

Sample and Design

The sample was 120 school and university students between 12 and 21 years of age selected by their teachers as being 'in the middle range of ability'. 40 were 12/13 years of age, 40 15/16 and 40 19-21. Half of each age range were male and half female. There were two interviewers, each interviewing half of each sample subgroup. Each interviewer gave half of each subgroup Kohlberg's Form A (short form) first and then interview E followed by interview L and half of each sample subgroup interview E followed by interview L, followed by Kohlberg's Form A.

Scoring

Each interviewer's transcripts were scored by two raters. Raters were trained by an initial explanation and reading of the scoring manuals for the three interviews, followed by trial scoring of a substantial section of transcript, followed by discussion of errors, followed by further trial scoring. This was repeated until both scorer and trainer felt confident a reasonable level of proficiency had been achieved. The extent of each scorable item of justification was marked on transcripts by the chief investigator.

Results and Discussion

Inter-rater reliabilities were 81 and 84 per cent for the two pairs of raters in regard to assignment to the complete range of sub-categories listed in the scoring section of the description of Study 1. 19 per cent of inter-rater disagreements involved confusions between Descriptive and Interest categories and 14 per cent confusions between

Interest and Social Harmony categories, both types of confusion often being accompanied by disagreement over assignment to level of abstraction. The prevalence of the first kind of confusion probably reflects the high frequency of responses in these two categories, while the second seems to reflect the inherent difficulty of adjudicating the concepts of interest and harmony. Percentages were fairly robust across interviewers and raters and thus Tables 3 and 4 show the average percentage of responses falling into the various categories and sub-categories for the four raters.

- Tables 3 and 4 -

Table 3 shows that the L and Form A interviews encourage a higher percentage of Punishment responses than the E interview, probably because they both mention situations attracting legally enforceable penalties. (Analysis of variance showed interview influenced Punishment responses, P less than .05.) Kohlberg's Form A shows a tendency towards more Interest and less Descriptive responses than the other interviews, accompanied by a greater proportion of Interest responses falling into the Individual Interest category. This is almost certainly due to the fact that Form A situations emphasise conflicts of personal interest. (The interview factor had a significant effect on both Descriptive and Interest responses, P less than .05 in both cases. There was a significant interaction between interview and abstraction level in determining the percentage of an individual's Interest responses falling into abstraction levels, P less than .01.) Table 3 also shows some tendencies attributable to scoring inaccuracy. Compared to the results

from Interviews E and L in Table 1, those in Table 3 show a greater percentage of responses in the Descriptive and Interest categories, about the same percentage in the Belief category and less in other categories. This is probably due to a tendency on the part of scorers to favour the two most frequent categories when in doubt.

As we might expect, some of the five trends emerging from Study 1 are less marked in Study 2, but all five are still present in some form. Trends 1 and 3 imply that the average level of abstraction will follow the order 1,2,3 (least to most) with increasing age. We can test this against the null hypothesis that ordering is random by computing the probability that a given number of raters from four would exhibit the predicted ranking under this null hypothesis. Each interview was tested separately using this method. All four raters for all three interviews showed the order predicted by trends 1 and 3 and thus the null hypotheses were rejected in every case, P less than .001. A similar test was applied to test the suggestion that the ratio of Social Belief to Personal Belief peaks at 15/16. This was only significant for the E interview (P less than .05). However three of the four raters showed the trend for the other two interviews. A similar test of the tendency for there to be more Reflective responses at 19-21 than at either of the younger levels was significant for all three interviews, P less than .05. The trend for Living Faith and Theological responses to peak at 15/16 was significant for the E interview (P less than .05). This trend was not in evidence for the Form A and L interviews, probably because the joint influence of the tendency for raters to underestimate these categories and the absence of an invitation to mention religion in the

Form A interview produced low levels of religious responses for these interviews.

The developmental trends in the content of rules noted in the first study were repeated for the E and L interviews. The second question from Kohlberg's Form A showed the strongest developmental trend in the content of rules for this interview (Joe lies to his father in order to go to camp; should Joe's brother Alex tell his father?). The youngest group tend to dwell on the need for Alex to consider his relations with his father or possible parental punishment or the idea that lying is wrong. The two older groups are more inclined to see the problem in terms of relations between Alex and Joe. This finding reflects the trend away from reliance on parental authority but not that towards autonomous decision-making. It is significant that the questions in Kohlberg's Form A focus on dilemmas relating to rules that are designed to minimise harm to others and thus replies to the questions do not throw much light on the interviewee's approach to the content of rules governing choices designed to maximise benefits to the self or others.

Comparison with Other Methods

It appears from inspection of the more recent versions of Kohlberg's scoring manuals (Kohlberg et al., 1977; Colby and Kohlberg, 1987b), that the following mappings between the subcategories identified here and Kohlberg's stages are justified. Personal Belief, Punishment, Individual Behaviour, Individual and Local Interest are assigned to Stages 1 and 2. Social Belief, Local Harmony and Wider Descriptive belong to Stage 3. Wider Interest, Wider Harmony and Ideological belong

to Stage 4, while Rights Descriptive belongs to Stage 5. Using these assumptions the raw data from each interview in each study were assigned to Kohlberg stages. Results for interviews in both studies resemble the pattern of Kohlbergian studies of adolescent moral reasoning, with percentage of responses in Stages 1 and 2 declining in early adolescence, percentages of responses at Stage 3 being consistent with the idea that this peaks during early adolescence, while those of responses at Stages 4 and 5 increase throughout the period, with Stage 4 responses usually more numerous than Stage 5 (Kohlberg, 1984; Colby and Kohlberg, 1987a). However, for the Form A interview the percentage of responses at Stages 1 and 2 begins to rise again between 15/16 and 19-21, whereas in all other interviews it continues to fall, except for interview E in Study 2, where it stays roughly the same. This is probably related to the 'regression' in level of moral reasoning found in Kohlbergian studies among American college students (Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969; Kohlberg, 1974). Whether such a regression appears or not depends on whether the tendency for Personal Belief to rise in the 16-21 age range is counterbalanced by the tendency for Individual plus Local Interest to fall. Kohlberg's Form A, like his other interviews, tends to lessen the latter tendency by asking questions about individuals and thus minimising the shift to Wider Interest responses in this period. The reader can repeat these exercises on the approximate assumption that responses from all content categories whose breakdowns are not given divide equally into their two or three component levels of abstraction at all ages.

The claim made here that the content of moral rules shows a shift from paternalistic to autonomistic attitudes has some parallel with

Kohlberg's idea that moral judgement begins at Stage 1 by being heteronymous or other-directed and ends at Stage 6 in a personal commitment to decisions based on universal ethical principles. Even at this very global level the analysis suggested here has, however, three considerable differences from that of Kohlberg. The first is that he conceived the highest level of moral reasoning (Stage 6) to assert the right to personal decisions based on moral convictions, whereas Stage 5 reasoning involved utilitarianism. Personal autonomy as conceived here involves the combined operation of those principles that limit harm to others, those that give individuals the right to decide and those that determine a fair decision. Thus elements of reasoning that are separated in Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6 are brought together in the concept of autonomous decision-making. The second difference is that the present method of analysis draws a distinction between the classification of forms of justification for moral rules and judgements and the classification of the contents of moral rules, whereas Kohlberg's scheme tends to confound these two aspects. The third difference is that the justification of moral rules is held to proceed towards distinct forms of individuation rather than through Kohlberg's unilinear stage sequence. The content of rules also shows some, though less marked, signs of individuation. Those who assert the equality of opportunity are heading in a different direction from those who aim at equality of outcome and individuals differ in which rules they give priority to when a conflict arises. Yet progress towards belief in the right to make autonomous decisions in socially accepted situations so long as others are not harmed is relatively uniform. In this sense we may see the content of moral rules tending towards a socially approved norm of

autonomous behaviour. The reasons that are given to justify this norm are on the other hand quite varied and do not show development towards a standard outcome.

Williams's (1969) categorisation procedure is intended to classify replies to a very different type of interview from the ones used in the present studies. In view of this the similarity is considerable, though four differences stand out. The first is that Williams doesn't use the abstraction dimension systematically and for this reason a considerable amount of information is lost in using his method. The second is that while all Williams's categories can be mapped onto the categories used here, the reverse is not true. It may be that his categories are adequate for his interview procedure, but if applied to dilemma interviews several types of response have no natural home, particularly subsets of those called here Descriptive and Reflective. His Autonomous, Egalitarian and Reciprocity categories are subsets of the Descriptive category described here, but many other kinds of descriptive justification commonly occur. Thirdly, in grouping his categories Williams emphasises the distinction between justifications based on the opinions and needs of the self and those based on the opinions and needs of others. In the categorisation system used here the only category directly reflecting the first of these elements is Personal Belief. Reactions that would be scored as Individual Punishment and Individual Behaviour could also reflect an emphasis on self, but such reactions are in fact rare in the interviews used here because they are not invited by the questions. It seems likely that an extension of the categorisation method used here to include more discriminations based on Williams's self-other dimension as well as its use with alternative styles of

interview will enable a more rounded picture of the development of moral reasoning to appear. The fourth difference is that, like Kohlberg, Williams fails to draw a clear distinction between the content of rules and the form of justifications.

The three approaches discussed in this section have quite divergent educational implications. Logically coherent approaches to moral education depend upon articulating a theory about human nature and its development with an ethical theory and a view of the development of moral reasoning. This very considerable task lies beyond the scope of this paper. It will however be evident that a theory of the development of moral reasoning that stresses individuation under the influence of historically conditioned ideologies and cultural influences will produce a very different educational theory from one, like Kohlberg's, which emphasises developmental stages produced by the attempt of the individual to structure experience or one, like Williams's, which emphasises individuation produced primarily by internal psychological influences. The viewpoint advocated here certainly does not deny the importance of such internal and possibly originally genetic factors, but it gives more importance to external cultural influences than either Kohlberg or Williams.

The analysis of developmental changes in the content of rules presented here has more direct educational implications. It suggests that while the demand for autonomous decision-making becomes significant by the end of secondary school and is well-established among tertiary age students, this demand is not at present extended to decisions about the school curriculum by the Australian youth interviewed here. The need for informed guidance by authority is still largely accepted in this

area. It would be interesting to study in more detail how the demand for autonomous decision-making is applied to other aspects of school and college or university life.

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	Interview E			Interview L			Interview A		
Age	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21
Descriptive	26	21	21	35	31	29	24	28	26
Belief	23	25	21	21	22	18	21	21	16
Behaviour	15	9	15	9	5	9	13	8	14
Punishment	1	2	2	8	7	7	2	1	2
Interest	20	21	23	16	17	17	14	12	15
Harmony	10	7	5	7	10	12	21	23	20
Relig. Fact.	3	8	3	1	3	3	2	2	2
Living Faith	2	7	5	4	5	3	3	6	4
Ideological			4			2			3
Theological			1			1			

Table 1. Percentage of Replies Falling into Broad Categories for Study 1

	Interview E			Interview L			Interview A		
Age	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21
Desc. Local	10	11	6				14	16	10
Desc. Wider	60	58	38	54	46	34	57	49	45
Desc. Rights	31	31	57	46	54	66	29	36	44
Belief Pers.	65	49	69	64	47	65	67	55	68
Belief Social	35	51	31	36	53	35	33	46	32
Interest Ind.	40	17	6	38	14	6	67	17	11
Interest Loc.	30	37	2	31	35	15	17	28	8
Interest Wid.	30	45	92	32	52	79	17	56	81

Table 2. Percentage of Replies Within Three Broad Categories Falling into Levels of Abstraction for Study 1

	Interview E			Interview L			Form A		
Age	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21
Descriptive	43	40	38	33	30	30	29	33	29
Belief	18	19	19	21	22	21	16	16	17
Behaviour	6	7	6	9	8	9	8	8	8
Punishment	2	2	2	5	5	5	11	5	4
Interest	21	19	21	25	26	24	32	34	35
Harmony	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
Relig. Fact.	5	6	5	2	2	2			1
Living Faith	3	3	2	1	1	1			1
Ideological		1	4		2	4			2
Theological			1						

Table 3. Percentage of Replies Falling into Broad Categories for Study 2

	Interview E			Interview L			Form A		
Age	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21	12/13	15/16	19-21
Desc. Local	13	10	6				17	23	4
Desc. Wider	73	75	70	81	76	59	80	61	63
Desc. Rights	14	15	24	19	24	42	3	16	33
Belief Pers.	65	46	63	60	45	60	48	38	51
Belief Social	35	55	38	40	55	40	52	62	49
Interest Ind.	11	13	15	37	27	19	76	71	51
Interest Loc.	50	36	19	29	36	29	11	14	30
Interest Wid.	39	51	67	34	37	51	13	16	19

Table 4. Percentage of Replies Within Three Broad Categories Falling into Levels of Abstraction for Study 2